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"Transporting QoS mapping information in a packet radio network"
(QoS-kartoitustieton välitys pakettiradioverkossa)

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The application has according to an entry made in the register of patent applications on 05.12.1999 with the name changed into Nokia Networks Oy.

Täten todistetaan, että oheiset asiakirjat ovat tarkkoja jäljennöksiä patentti- ja rekisterihallitukselle alkuaan annetuista selityksestä, pätenttivaatimuksista, tiivistelmästä ja piirustuksista.

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Transporting QoS mapping information in a packet radio network

Background of the invention

The invention relates to methods and equipment for controlling Quality of Service (QoS) in mobile communications systems having a packet data transmission capability. More specifically, the invention relates to sending data packets on the basis of QoS mapping information and transportation of the QoS mapping information between various nodes in such a mobile communications system.

For the GPRS phase 2 and UMTS systems a more comprehensive QoS support is required. For this purpose, QoS-related information must be maintained at the network boundary elements, e.g., at the MS and GGSN.

Methods and equipment for maintaining such QoS-related information and some possible mappings between external QoS mechanisms and enhanced GPRS QoS mechanisms have been described in references 1 and 2 which are co-assigned earlier patent applications. However, these references are not published at the priority date of the present application, and the relevant subject-matter of them is substantially repeated here.

Currently it is not possible to transform information needed to perform QoS mapping and translation functions between the external network QoS mechanisms and mobile network specific QoS mechanisms. This means that only very static QoS translation can be carried out by the mobile network boundary nodes. For providing different QoS values for different applications (such as real-time or non-real-time multimedia, file transmission, background e-mail transfer etc.) means for maintaining consistent information at the mobile station (MS) and GGSN nodes are needed.

No solutions for this problem are known for GPRS/UMTS networks. In the Internet there are mechanisms available that can be used to transport QoS or flow specific information. However, this information is interpreted by every node along the end-to-end transmission path and not only by the end-points (the MS and the GGSN).

Disclosure of the invention

An object of the invention is to provide a mechanism for enabling more dynamic QoS provisioning for individual applications. This object is achieved with a method and equipment which are characterized by what is

disclosed in the attached independent claims. Preferred embodiments of the invention are disclosed in the attached dependent claims.

The invention is based on a vision that QoS mapping information must be transferred between the GPRS/UMTS network boundaries. In other words, The invention provides a mechanism for mapping multiple downlink IP flows (IPflow1, ... IPflown) with different QoS needs to GPRS (or UMTS...) flows. The latter flows are defined by PDP contexts (PDP1 ... PDPm) or QoS profiles (QoS_{p1} ... QoS_m) within one profile fulfilling the needs. The basic idea is that for at least some data flows (e.g. real-time applications), the mapping being performed in the boundary node (i.e. GGSN) is based on a filter which is configurable (by selection or modification) from a user/terminal. Such a filter can be implemented as a set of predetermined parameters and/or conditions which are used to identify packets or data flows. A filter for a mobile station should comprise at least the IP address of the mobile station in question. The MS's IP address is known from the PDP context record, and it does not have to be transmitted in the filter specification between the MS and the GGSN. Additionally, the filter may comprise any data which can be used for identifying data packets requiring a certain QoS, and which should therefore be multiplexed onto certain PDP contexts, such as Source Address, RSVP Flow Identifier, Port Number (e.g. the TCP or UDP port number used), Upper layer protocol (e.g. UDP, RTP, etc.), Type of Service (IPv4), Connection Type (IPv6) and/or Traffic Class field (IPv6). The filter may also comprise the IP Address Space for giving a higher QoS for packets coming from a corporate network (i.e. intranet) than for packets from the common Internet.

The filter according to the invention is used to define the characteristics of the IP flows that are to be mapped to the GPRS flow in question. The terminal may control the filter identifying the filter parameters in an information element which can be included e.g. in a PDP context activation or a PDP context modification message. The filter can be also be defined/redefined in connection with QoS profile activation or modification.

The problem solved by the invention is relevant in GPRS phase 2 and its future evolution, such as UMTS.

According to one embodiment, QoS information for the profile/context is included in the QoS Profile information element as in GPRS phase 1. The mapping and filtering information may be transferred in the protocol configuration options information element, vendor-specific options, or in a

new information element introduced and devoted to this purpose. This information may include source and/or destination IP addresses, TCP and UDP port numbers used, upper layer protocol information, possibly Secure Parameters Index (if IPSEC is used), differentiated services parameters, and

5 RSVP filters and flow specifications, or some other identifier or parameters in the packets.

For each PDP Address a different quality of service (QoS) profile may be requested. For example, some PDP addresses may be associated with E-mail that can tolerate lengthy response times. Other applications cannot

10 tolerate delay and demand a very high level of throughput, interactive applications being one example. These different requirements are reflected in the QoS profile. If a QoS requirement is beyond the capabilities of a PLMN, the PLMN negotiates the QoS profile as close as possible to the requested QoS profile. The MS either accepts the negotiated QoS profile, or deactivates the

15 PDP context.

An advantage of the invention is that the network elements (such as the SGSN nodes and the Base Station Subsystem) of a packet radio network do not have to interpret all QoS mechanisms of the external networks (IP, X.25 etc.) Instead, the mapping can be configured at the mobile station end and this

20 configuration will be transported to the other boundary node (i.e. the GGSN) of the packet radio network. Thus the entire packet radio network does not have to be updated to support all new QoS mechanisms.

The mechanism according to the invention is very generic. In other words, it is applicable in a wide variety of situations and configurations. It allows flexible access, configuration and usage of the filter information in the GGSN database. Use of the filter according to the invention is entirely case and operator specific. The MS subscriber is provided with means for indicating to the gateway node at the mobile/fixed network boundary how the different applications, connections, flows, or other attributes should be treated and

25 30 which QoS should be used within the GPRS/UMTS network to transport the associated packets. Preferably, the GGSN should also maintain application/QoS/flow specific information.

Yet another advantage is that the flow/QoS specification transferred in the QoS profile establishment procedure or in the PDP context establishment can be very flexible. It could include source and destination IP addresses, TCP and UDP port numbers used, upper layer protocol information,

possibly Secure Parameters Index in the case IPSEC is used, differentiated services parameters, and RSVP filters and flow specifications, all of which are used to identify external applications, usages and flows that should be mapped to particular internal QoS classes or contexts.

5 Alternatively, information could be configured in a more static manner, in which case no dynamic change of attributes is possible. In this case the operator configures static conditions and translation of external QoS to internal QoS, for example, based on the used TCP/UDP port numbers. Yet another option is not to provide any QoS mapping functions and end-to-end QoS at all.

10 **Brief description of the drawings**

The invention will be described in more detail by means of preferred embodiments with reference to the appended drawing wherein:

15 Fig. 1 shows the architecture of a known GPRS/UMTS network;
Fig. 2 shows a known GPRS/UMTS transmission plane;
Fig. 3 shows the interworking between different network elements;
15 Fig. 4 shows a GGSN comprising the filter according to the invention;
Fig. 5 shows the use of the filter according to the invention; and
Figs. 6 and 7 show transporting the filter information in a context
20 activation or modification procedure, respectively.

Detailed description of the invention

As shown in Figs. 1 and 2, the present invention can be applied to any mobile communications system having a packet data transmission capability.

25 The term 'packet data protocol' (PDP) or 'PDP context' as used herein should be understood to generally refer to any state in a mobile station and in at least one network element or functionality, which state provides a data packet transmission path or a tunnel with a specific set of parameters through the mobile communications network. The term 'node' as used herein
30 should be understood to generally refer to any network element or functionality which handles the data packets transferred through the PDP channel.

The invention can be especially preferably used for providing a general packet radio service GPRS in the pan-European digital mobile communication system GSM or in corresponding mobile communication systems,
35 such as DCS1800 (also known as GSM1800) and PCS (Personal Communi-

cation System). In the following, the preferred embodiments of the invention will be described by means of a GPRS packet radio network formed by the GPRS service and the GSM system without limiting the invention to this particular packet radio system.

5 The invention is equally applicable in so-called third generation mobile networks, such as UMTS. In this case, the GSM radio interface will be replaced with an UMTS radio interface, as shown in Fig. 2.

10 Fig. 3 illustrates the interworking between different network elements. After these modifications, a parameter-level mapping between differentiated services and RSVP in the Internet and in GPRS may be provided as follows, for example:

15 Priority information in the Internet is mapped to service precedence in GPRS. An indication concerning real-time vs. non-real-time requirements in the Internet is mapped to delay class and/or reliability information in GPRS: at least two delay types are needed, but mapping of traffic types more precisely to several delay classes is also possible.

20 Reliability information may be used to indicate the reliability requirements of each application in the form of one of at least two reliability classes. If reliable transmission (retransmissions, checksums and/or TCP) is needed, the profile associated with the data packets indicates reliability class 1. If reliable delivery over the radio interface is needed, but UDP in the GPRS backbone is sufficient, the profile associated with the data packets indicates reliability class 2. Depending on the requirements, the profile associated with the data packets may alternatively indicate reliability class 3, 4 or 5. Reliability 25 classes 4 and 5 will be used for real-time traffic.

30 A further feature of the present invention may be a mapping of the QoS parameters used in the mobile-communication network to those used in a user application in the mobile packet data terminal or those used in the external communication system, and vice versa. The MS, knowing the requirements of the applications, determines the corresponding QoS profile values, establishes a new PDP context for these packets and indicates to the GGSN how to recognise packets belonging to this context. In the following, two examples of the mapping will be given.

Example 1 (given as an example of how the MS can decide which GPRS parameter values it chooses for the context).

Simple Integrated Media Access (SIMA) is a new simple approach presented as an Internet-Draft by K. Kilkki, Nokia Research Center, June 5 1997. Internet-Drafts are working documents of the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF), its areas, and working groups. SIMA is used as an example of an Internet QoS scheme because it is capable of providing a uniform service concept for different needs from file transfer applications using TCP/IP protocol without loose delay and packet loss requirements to real-time applications 10 with very strict quality and availability requirements. According to the SIMA concept, each user shall define only two issues before the connection setup: a nominal bit rate (NBR) and the selection between real-time and non-real-time service classes. The NBR may have eight values 0 to 7. Mapping of parameters from SIMA to GPRS and vice versa may be as follows, for example:

15 Real-time/non-real-time bit: if this bit indicates real-time requirements, it is mapped to GPRS delay class 1, otherwise it is mapped to delay class 4. However, delay class 3 may be used for non-real-time services in case there is a special way to indicate best-effort traffic, e.g. this bit shall not always be present, or a more precise definition is used to differentiate real- 20 time, non-real-time, and best-effort traffic. A lower Reliability Class value may be assigned to real-time traffic than to non-real-time traffic in GPRS. Generally, Reliability classes 1, 2, and 3 are usually used for non-real-time traffic and classes 3, 4, and 5 for real-time traffic in GPRS. For non-real-time traffic, the higher the NBR is, the lower Reliability Class value is suitable for transmission.

25

NBR values	GPRS service precedence value
6 and 7	1
3, 4, and 5	2
0, 1, and 2	3

Different names, such as priority or Nominal Bit Rate and traffic type, may also be chosen for the parameters. The QoS Profile may include all the existing parameters (service precedence, reliability class, delay class, mean bit rate and peak bit rate). Alternatively, it could only include some of the 30 parameters, such as the mean and peak bit rates. QoS Profile could also include a maximum burst size parameters to ease buffer allocation procedure.

- QoS scheduling in GPRS network elements (e.g. in an SGSN and a GGSN) is based on the delay class. This may require at least two buffers : one for real-time packets (this buffer should be much smaller!) and another one for non-real-time packets. Real-time traffic should always be sent before non-real-
- 5 time traffic. Service precedence defines the order in which packets can be dropped in case of network congestion.

Example 2 (describes how to choose QoS values and establish a special profile to support a given differentiated services code point, for providing proper QoS profile values and a differentiated services code point value as
10 filter information for configuring the filter).

Mapping a Type of Service (ToS) octet in the headers of IP PDUs to GPRS attributes. The ToS octet in an IP header is not widely used at the moment. Its original purpose was to include traffic type information and to specify what kind of service is required from the packet delivery. Because the ToS
15 octet is not in common use nowadays, it is possible to redefine the bits in that octet for the purposes of the present invention. A definition of the ToS octet is given in RFC 791. Bits 0 to 2 of ToS give the preference, bits 3 to 5 give the ToS required by the packet (e.g. delay, throughput, and reliability levels requested), and bits 6 to 7 are reserved for future use. RFC 1349 extends the
20 ToS field by one bit (taken from the "reserved for future" bits). Thus, 4 bits can be used to indicate a ToS.

Mapping between the precedence bits (0 to 2 in ToS) and GPRS service precedence may be as follows:

bit values (0 to 2)	service precedence value
111 and 110	001 (highest priority)
101, 100, and 011	010 (normal priority)
010, 001, and 000	011 (lowest priority)

25 There are three different ways to perform the mapping between the traffic type information (i.e. ToS field in the ToS octet) and the GPRS delay class:

If only the bit 3 in the ToS field is used to indicate the delay requirements in IP header: value 0 of bit 2 is mapped to GPRS delay class 1 or
30 2 and value 1 of the bit 2 is mapped to GPRS delay class 4 (best effort).

If the whole ToS field in ToS is used for indicating delay requirements, i.e. 4 bits (bits 3-6) are available for that purpose, one possible mapping could be: bit value 1000 is mapped to GPRS delay class 1 (i.e. to bit value 000), bit value 0100 to GPRS delay class 2 (i.e. to value 001), ToS values 0010 and 0001 to GPRS delay class 3 (i.e. to value 010), and the ToS value 0000 to GPRS delay class 4 (i.e. to value 011).

Another way of mapping the IP's ToS bits to GPRS delay classes would be: 11x to delay class 1, 10x to delay class 2, 01x to delay class 3, and 00x to delay class 4. In this case, x means that there might be one or more additional bits used for ToS, but they do not have any impact on the process of selecting the GPRS delay class. If more delay classes will be defined for GPRS later, the mapping could take into account also those additional bits.

Currently there is also one bit in the IP ToS field specifying the desired reliability level. If this bit is still available in the future, e.g. if the first choice above is chosen, this bit could carry reliability information and could be mapped to GPRS reliability class in the following way: a value 0 in bit 5 inside the ToS octet is mapped to the reliability class 000 (subscribed reliability class) and a value 1 is mapped to the reliability class 001 (defining the most reliable service). The use of that bit may however be too vague because the GPRS defines many other reliability levels as well and this cannot be expressed using only one bit.

The mapping described above in Example 2 may be applied in a rather similar way in IPv6. The name of the appropriate field is then Traffic Class instead of ToS.

Fig. 3 illustrates the operation of a GPRS mobile station and GPRS network elements, as well as integration with external network QoS concepts. The MS or the software in the terminal equipment TE (e.g. in a laptop computer) provides mapping of external network QoS requirements to GPRS QoS mechanisms. The TE could for example provide QoS management functions through an Application Programming Interface (API). The application-level software may insert into the data packets, e.g. inside the IP header itself, the QoS information or a profile tag, or it can indicate the correct flow which the packet belongs to using some other suitable means. It can also use the RSVP to convey the necessary information via appropriate mapping layers to lower layers. The software of the MS may, alternatively, decide the QoS profile based e.g. on the used source and destination IP addresses, or on the source

and destination port numbers, or on some other information configured to the MS.

For Mobile Originated (MO) data, the MS schedules data packets based on the QoS information received from the application or from the GPRS protocol suite in the Terminal Equipment. The MS schedules the incoming MO packets according to their delay class. In the SNDC layer, the MS selects the appropriate LLC SAP (Service Access Point) as indicated by the SGSN during PDP context activation or modification:

Fig. 4 illustrates a GGSN comprising the filter according to the invention. The GGSN receives MS-terminated data packets from multiple sources, collectively referred to as Service Providers SP. Fig. 4 shows three typical service providers: an Internet Service Provider ISP for providing access to the Internet; a Company Network Server CSN for providing access to closed areas of the Internet, commonly called intranets and extranets; and Content Providers CP for providing access to various entertainment and news services, such as video-on-demand, etc.

The GGSN comprises a scheduler/translator ST. As its name implies, it schedules transmission of packets on the basis of network load, packet priority, arrival time, etc. The scheduling part of the ST is largely known to the skilled reader.

The translating part of the ST makes use of the filter FI according to the invention. It maps data packets from the IP networks (11 - 12 in Fig. 1) to the packet radio network (13 in Fig. 1). The invention provides a solution for a situation wherein several applications and data flows share a common IP address but require different QoS values.

Fig. 5 illustrates the use of the filter FI according to the invention at the GGSN. In step 71 the GGSN receives a data packet addressed to a given mobile station MS. The GGSN reads the MS's IP address from the corresponding protocol header and uses the filter FI to determine the corresponding PDP context or QoS profile. The MS's IMSI can be determined from the packets' destination IP address. In step 72 the GGSN gets the corresponding Tunnel Identifier TID. Next, in step 73 the GGSN sends the data packet via the SGSN to the MS via that particular context which is associated with an appropriate QoS for this packet.

Fig. 6 shows how a mobile station can configure the QoS mapping and interworking actions by means of a context activation procedure according to the invention. In step 6-1, the MS sends to the SGSN an Activate PDP Context Request comprising an NSAPI, a PDP type, a PDP address, an Access Point Name, QoS Requested, a Filter Specification and PDP configuration options. (For understanding the present information, the important parameters are the Filter and QoS information.) The MS may use the PDP Address to indicate whether it requires the use of a static or a dynamic PDP address. In the latter case, the MS shall leave PDP Address empty. The MS may use the Access Point Name to select a reference point to a certain external network. The Access Point Name is a logical name referring to the external packet data network that the subscriber wishes to connect to. QoS Requested indicates the desired QoS profile. The Filter specification indicates which external data packets are associated with a particular PDP context. Packets indicated by the filtering conditions of this filter should be considered as belonging to this particular PDP context. PDP Configuration Options may be used to request optional PDP parameters from the GGSN (see GSM 09.60). PDP Configuration Options is sent transparently through the SGSN.

Using dynamic configuration and dynamic PDP addresses involves the problem of how to ensure that the context activation affects the correct GGSN, and how the GGSN knows whether to activate a new context with the same IP address or a different address. Three solutions for this problem can be found:

1. Using an Access Point Name which points to a certain GGSN ~~box~~ and indicates that another context is needed, and using the same IP address.

2. Adding an indication (e.g. a new information element) to the context activation request, indicating to the GGSN (and the SGSN) that another context is needed. This context has the same IP address as the previous one. In this case the SGSN selects the same GGSN as for the previous context of that PDP type.

3. Adding the PDP and IP addresses desired for the context to the context activation request message. This PDP/IP address may be given to one of the previous contexts, i.e. a dynamic address. In this case the SGSN selects the GGSN which is handling that particular address.

Security functions may be performed in step 6-2, but they are not relevant for understanding the invention.

In step 6-3, the SGSN validates the request 6-1. The SGSN creates a Tunnel Identifier TID for the requested PDP context by combining the IMSI stored in the MM context with the NSAPI received from the MS. The SGSN may restrict the requested QoS attributes given its capabilities, the current load, and the subscribed QoS profile. Next, in step 6-3 the SGSN sends a Create PDP Context Request (comprising a PDP type, a PDP address, an Access Point Name, the negotiated QoS Profiles, the desired filter, the TID, and PDP configuration options) to the GGSN. The GGSN may also restrict the requested QoS attributes given its capabilities, and the current load. If the MS requests a dynamic address, then the SGSN lets a GGSN allocate the dynamic address. The SGSN may restrict the requested QoS attributes given its capabilities, the current load, and the subscribed QoS profile. The SGSN sends a Create PDP Context Request (PDP Type, PDP Address, Access Point Name, QoS Negotiated, Filter spec, TID, Selection Mode, PDP Configuration Options) message to the affected GGSN. Access Point Name shall be the APN Network Identifier of the APN selected according to the procedure described in annex A. PDP Address shall be empty if a dynamic address is requested. The GGSN may use the Access Point Name to find an external network. Selection Mode indicates whether a subscribed APN was selected, or whether a non-subscribed APN sent by MS or a non-subscribed APN chosen by SGSN was selected. Selection Mode is set according to annex A. The GGSN may use Selection Mode when deciding whether to accept or reject the PDP context activation. For example, if an APN requires subscription, then the GGSN is configured to accept only the PDP context activation that requests a subscribed APN as indicated by the SGSN with Selection Mode. The GGSN creates a new entry in its PDP context table and generates a Charging Id. The new entry allows the GGSN to route PDP PDUs between the SGSN and the external PDP network, and to start charging. The GGSN may further restrict QoS Negotiated given its capabilities and the current load. GGSN shall maintain information for QoS mapping and multiplex incoming data packets from the external network onto the active PDP contexts according to the defined filtering conditions at the GGSN. For the outgoing packets, a certain external QoS might be associated with the packets of a particular PDP context. The GGSN then returns a Create PDP Context Response (TID, PDP Address, BB

Protocol, Reordering Required, PDP Configuration Options, QoS Negotiated, Charging Id, Cause) message to the SGSN. PDP Address is included if the GGSN allocated a PDP address. BB Protocol indicates whether TCP or UDP shall be used to transport user data on the backbone network between the SGSN and GGSN. Reordering Required indicates whether the SGSN shall re-order N-PDUs before delivering the N-PDUs to the MS. PDP Configuration Options contain optional PDP parameters that the GGSN may transfer to the MS. These optional PDP parameters may be requested by the MS in the Activate PDP Context Request message, or may be sent unsolicited by the GGSN. PDP Configuration Options is sent transparently through the SGSN. The Create PDP Context messages are sent over the GPRS backbone network. If the QoS Negotiated received from the SGSN is incompatible with the PDP context being activated (e.g., the reliability class is insufficient to support the PDP type), then the GGSN rejects the Create PDP Context Request message. The compatible QoS profiles can be configured by the GGSN operator.

In step 6-4, the GGSN returns a Create PDP Context Response (comprising a TID, a PDP Address, the negotiated QoS Profiles, and PDP configuration options) to the SGSN. The SGSN inserts the NSAPI with the GGSN address in the PDP context. If the MS has requested a dynamic address, the PDP address received from the GGSN is inserted in the PDP context. The SGSN selects a Radio Priority based on QoS Negotiated, and returns an Activate PDP Context Accept (PDP Type, PDP Address, TI, QoS Negotiated, Radio Priority, PDP Configuration Options) message to the MS. The SGSN is now able to route PDP PDUs between the GGSN and the MS, and to start charging.

Next, in step 6-5, the SGSN selects a Radio Priority Level based on each negotiated QoS profile, and returns an Activate PDP Context Accept (comprising a PDP type, a PDP Address, an NSAPI, the negotiated QoS Profiles, a Radio Priority Level and a SAPI for each QoS profile, the filter and PDP configuration options) to the MS. Now the SGSN is able to route PDP PDUs between the GGSN and the MS. The SAPI indicates which QoS profile uses which SAPI.

Fig. 7 shows a context modification procedure. In step 7-1 the MS sends the SGSN an Modify PDP Context Request. In step 7-3 the SGSN sends to the GGSN an Update PDP Context Request. Both of these requests comprise the filter with modified parameters. The filter indicates which exter-

nal data packets are associated with a particular PDP context. Packets indicated by the filtering conditions should be interpreted as belonging to this particular PDP context and they should be provided with the QoS negotiated for the context. The Update PDP Context Request message is used to add, mod-

- 5 ify or cancel a QoS profile of a PDP context. If the GGSN receives from the SGSN a negotiated QoS which is incompatible with the PDP context being modified (e.g. the reliability class is insufficient to support the PDP type), the GGSN rejects the request. Compatible QoS profiles are configured by the GGSN operator. The GGSN may again restrict the requested QoS attributes
- 10 given its capabilities, and the current load. The GGSN stores the negotiated QoS values. The GGSN shall revise the QoS mapping information to conform to the new filter spec and Qos Profile negotiated (included in the request message). In steps 7-4 and 7-5 a positive response is returned to the MS.

The messages 7-1 through 7-5 are known from GPRS phase 2. According to the invention, the messages 7-1 and 7-3 are modified to convey the desired filtering parameters (and the messages 7-4 and 7-5 are modified to return a suitable acknowledgement).

The description only illustrates preferred embodiments of the invention. The invention is not, however, limited to these examples but it may vary within the scope of the appended claims. For example, it is not necessary that the receiving terminal is a mobile station but it can be any network element. Similarly, it is not necessary that the MT data packets originate from the IP network. Instead, the invention is applicable e.g. in a MS to MS call via a GGSN node. In this case the leg from one MS to the GGSN is a first communication subsystem and the leg from the GGSN to the other MS is a second communication subsystem.

Claims

1. A method for sending data packets (DP) from a first communication subsystem (11, 12), via a first network element (GGSN) to a second network element (MS) in a second communication subsystem (13);

5 the method comprising the steps of:

 sending the data packets (DP) in a first plurality of data flows in said first communication subsystem (11, 12);

 mapping said first plurality of data flows to a second plurality of data flows in said second communications subsystem (13);

10 characterized by:

 establishing at least one filter (FI) for controlling said mapping;

 associating said at least one filter (FI) with a data flow within said second plurality; and

 mapping at least one data flow on the basis of said filter (FI).

15 2. A method according to claim 1, characterized in that the first communications subsystem is an IP network and the method comprises allocating one IP address which is shared by all data flows within said second plurality.

20 3. A method according to claim 1, characterized in that the first communications subsystem is an IP network and the method comprises allocating a separate IP address for each data flow within said second plurality.

25 4. A method according to any one of the preceding claims, characterized by configuring said filter (FI) from said second network element (MS).

30 5. A method according to any one of the preceding claims, characterized in that said first communications subsystem is a packet radio network employing PDP protocol and said configuring step comprises sending a PDP context activation message (6-1, 6-3) or a PDP context modification message (7-1, 7-3).

6. A method according to any one of the preceding claims, characterized in that said associating is based on the second network ele-

ment's (MS) address, preferably its IP address, in said first communication subsystem (11, 12).

7. A method according to any one of the preceding claims, characterized in that said associating is based on the second network element's (MS) identifier, preferably its IMSI or Tunnel Identifier, in said second communication subsystem (13).

8. A method according to any one of the preceding claims, characterized by:

10 performing said mapping on the basis of said filter (FI) to data flows conveying real-time information; and

establishing default parameters for mapping the remaining data flows.

9. A first network element, preferably a Gateway GPRS Support Node (GGSN), for routing data packets (DP) from a first communication subsystem (11, 12), to a second network element (MS) in a second communication subsystem (13);

15 said first network element (GGSN) being adapted to:
receive the data packets (DP) from said first communication subsystem (11, 12) in a first plurality of data flows;

20 map said first plurality of data flows to a second plurality of data flows in said second communication subsystem (13);

characterized in that said first network element (GGSN) is adapted to:

25 establish at least one filter (FI) for controlling said mapping;
associate said at least one filter (FI) with a data flow within said second plurality; and
map at least one data flow on the basis of said filter (FI).

10. A digital signal for creating (6-1, 6-3) or modifying (7-1, 7-3) a PDP context in a support node (GGSN) for interfacing a first communication subsystem (11, 12) with a second communication subsystem (13); characterized in that said signal comprises information which at least partially defines a filter (FI) for controlling mapping of data flows from said first communication subsystem to said second communication subsystem (13) by said support node (GGSN).

(57) Abstract

A method and a GGSN support node for sending data packets to a mobile station (MS) in a mobile communications system (13) from an external communication system (11, 12). The GGSN receives data packets from the external communication system (11, 12) in a first plurality of data flows which it maps to a second plurality of data flows in the mobile communications system (13). It establishes at least one filter (FI) for controlling the mapping and associates the filter (FI) with the mobile station. It also maps at least one of the data flows on the basis of the filter (FI) and configures the filter (FI) on the basis of information (6-1, 7-1) which preferably originates from the mobile station (MS).

(Fig. 4)

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Fig. 1

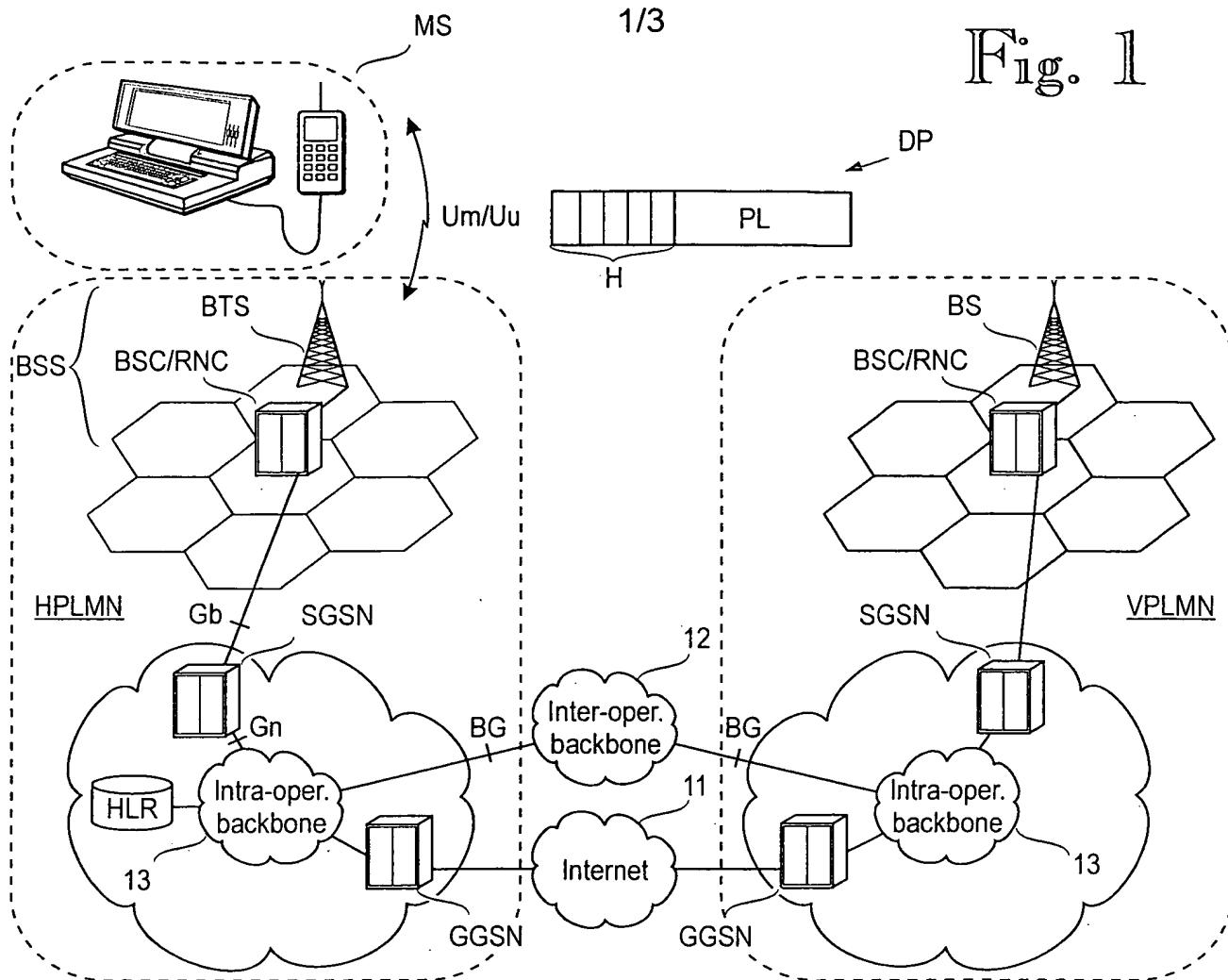
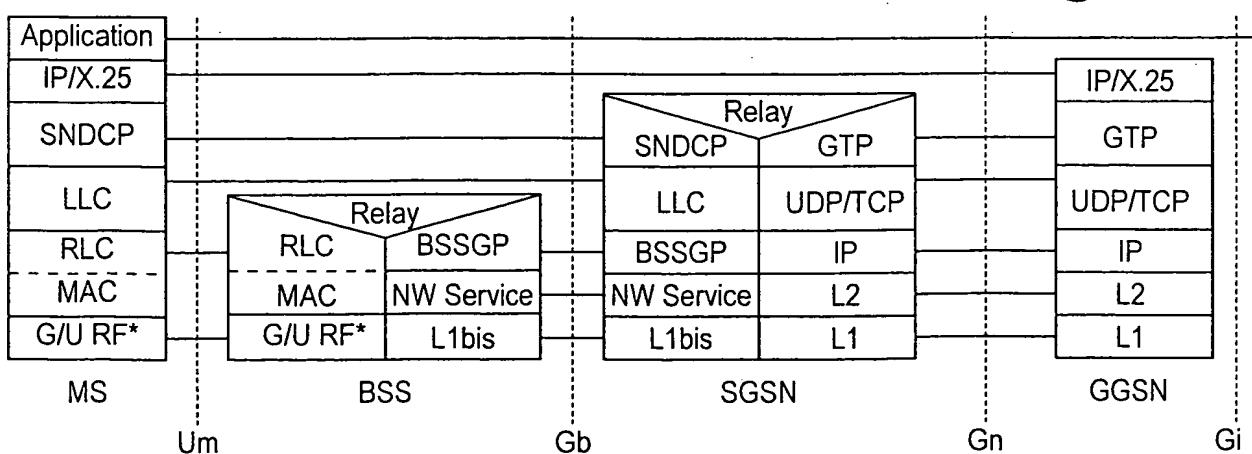
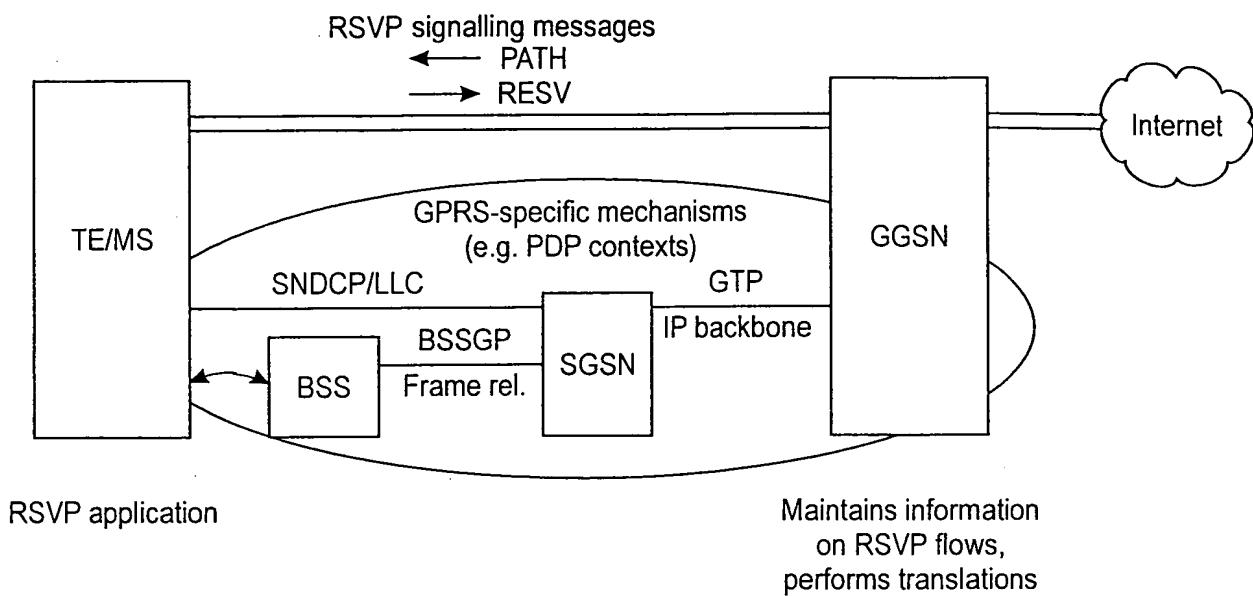


Fig. 2



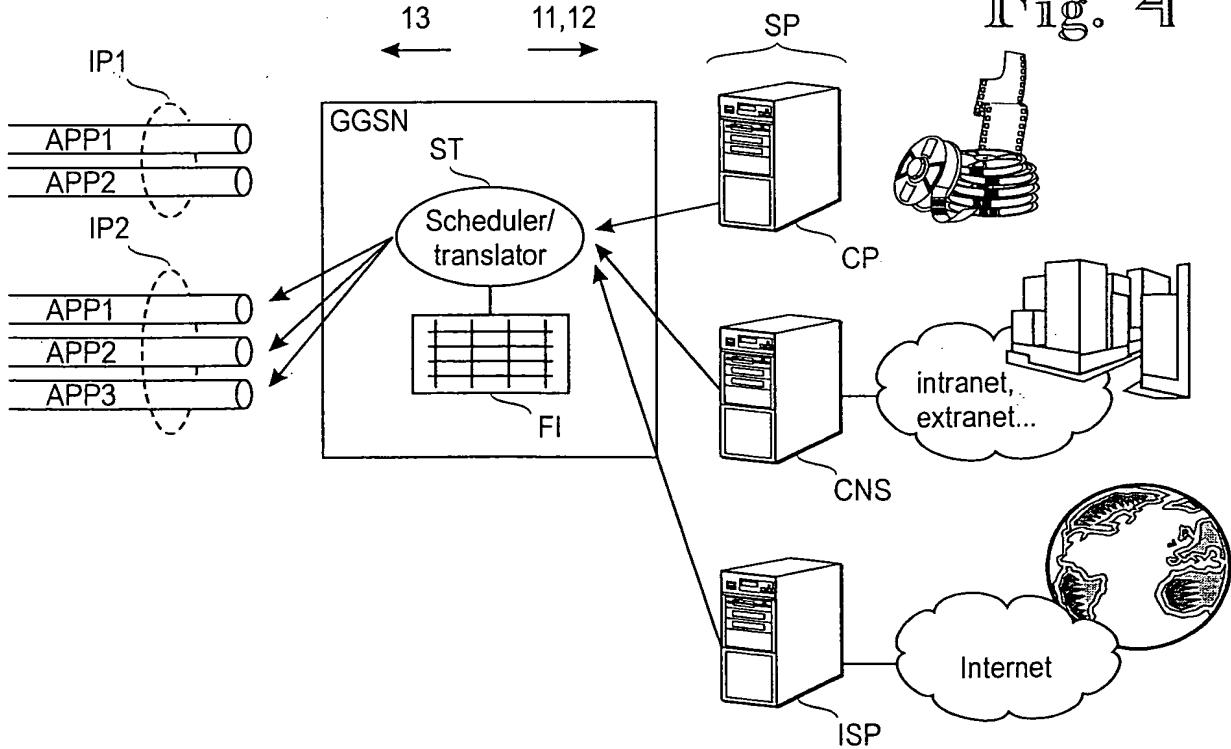
*G/U RF = GSM/UMTS Radio Interface

Fig. 3



13 11,12

Fig. 4



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Fig. 5

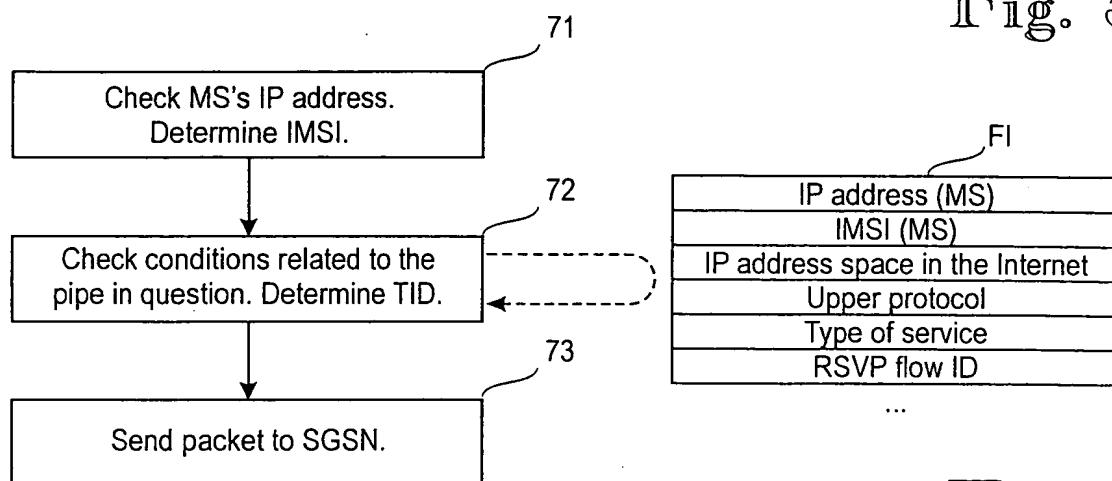


Fig. 6

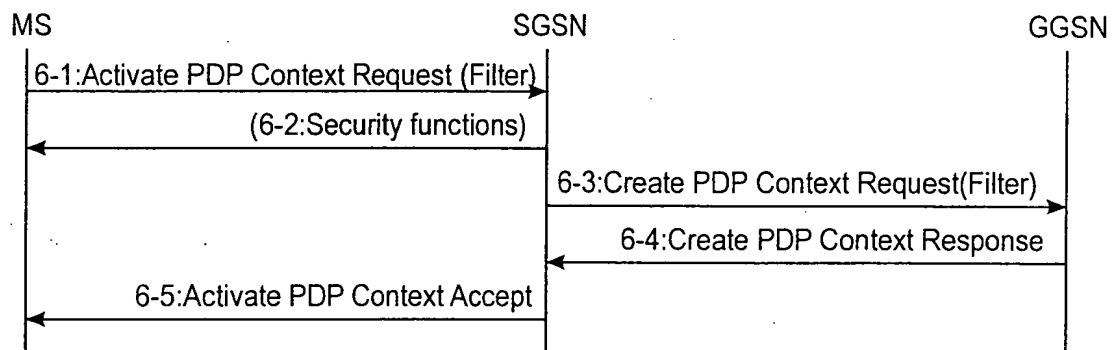


Fig. 7

